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# Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 32 | Min 23 | Humidity 56% Partly Cloudy Sensex 77,044 | Nifty 23,437 | Gold 95,300 | Silver 96,188 | Dollar 85.62 | Euro 97.29 | GBP 113.29

## SMALL MERCIES

Age criteria for Class 1 admissions for academic year 2025-26 relaxed; minimum age reduced from 6 years to 5.5 years

PAGE 2

## FRAUD ALERT

K'taka flag14,026 scammy numbers with Sanchar Saathi portal, but officials say not many aware of existence of site

PAGE 5

## Pharmacy Council asks members, including B'luru colleges, to address animal cruelty issues in Forced Swim Test, a method used to screen antidepressant drugs that experts say is nasty and unscientific

# CRUEL INTENTIONS

### Testing time: Small animals placed in container of water with no escape to check how stressed they are

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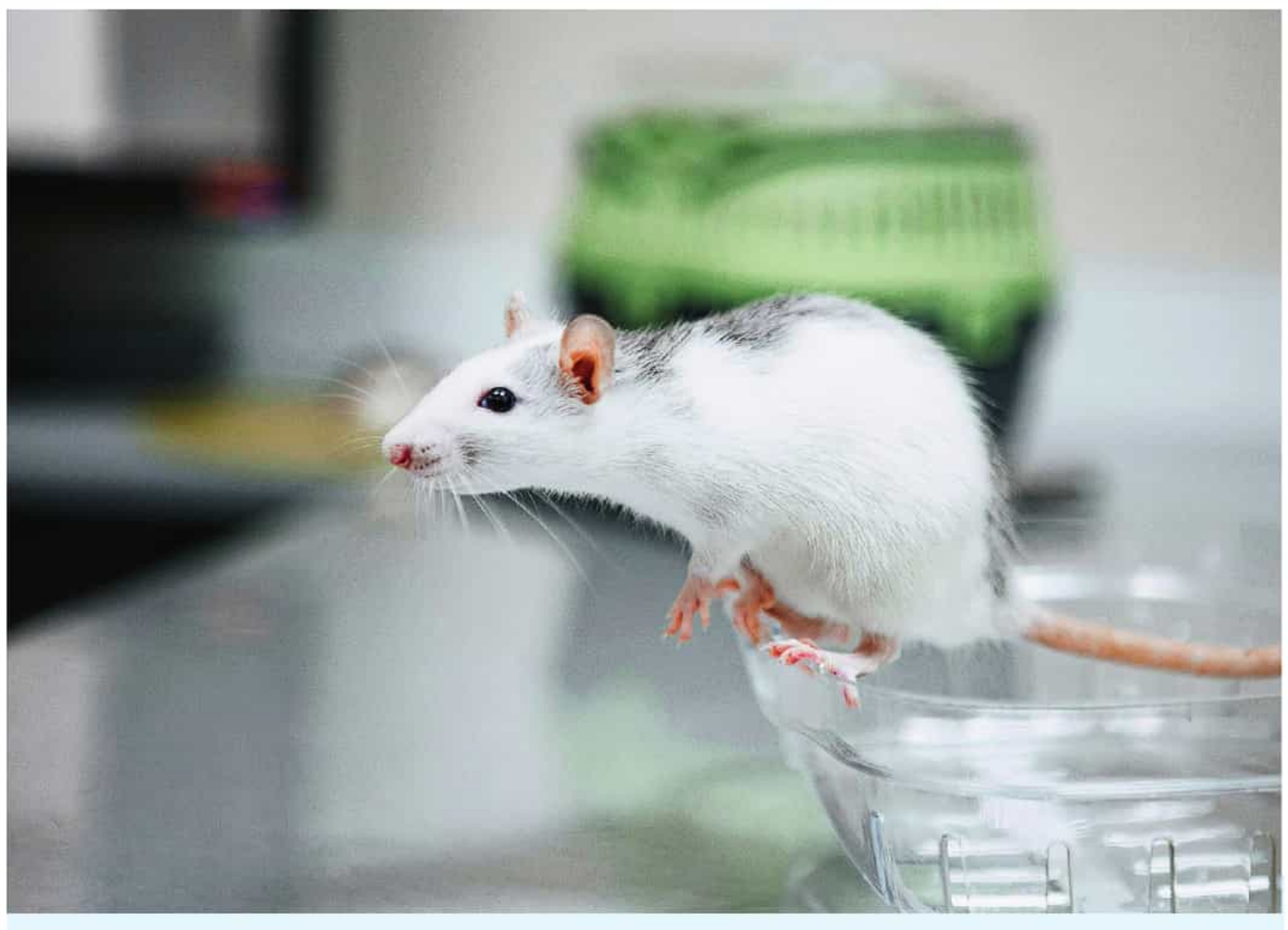
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR



The Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) has written to its member institutions, including colleges in Bengaluru, to take necessary action and address animal cruelty arising from the Forced Swim Test conducted in academic institutions and research settings.

The letter dated April 4 has sought the assistance of pharmacy colleges about the 'scientifically misleading and cruel animal test'. There are nearly 30 pharmacy colleges in the city with affiliation from PCI.

The council has approached institutions after the animal cruelty issue was raised by the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India.

The Forced Swim Test, also known as the Porsolt swim test, is a popular method used by research institutions for screening antidepressant drugs. During this test, a small animal, typically a rat or mouse, is placed in a container of water with no way to escape or any place to rest out of the water.

Once placed inside, the animal tends to swim and escape the stressful situation, but eventually becomes immobile and floats.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

**"The Pharmacy Council of India needs to ensure that research practices are not cruel by adopting policies that replace cruel animal experiments with advanced, non-animal methodologies**

— Anjana Aggarwal, science policy advisor at PETA

# They paved paradise...

Trees nurtured by citizens slathered with concrete as BBMP's contractors forget to leave space for rainwater percolation

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The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Forest Department has always been in the forefront to announce its mega plans to plant saplings. It had recently also re-launched its ambitious project of planting one crore saplings in Bengaluru.

However, the BBMP Forest Department has no plan on how to nurture and protect the saplings that have actually survived and grown into trees.

Environmentalists and social activists are up in arms against the BBMP Engineering Department for exhibiting their apathy towards trees while taking up developmental works that include upgrading footpaths or strengthening shoulder drains.

They came down heavily on the BBMP engineer (KR Puram) for not supervising the development of the footpath, on the service road between KR Puram Railway Station and Indian Telephone Industries (ITI), which resulted in concretising the space around the trees instead of leaving sufficient space for percolation of rainwater.

"I visited the spot and was shocked to see concrete around the trees. There is hardly any space for percolation of rainwater. I am at a loss to understand the logic of the BBMP's engineer to take up the development of the footpath that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

## THINGS TO DO

### 01 Melody magic

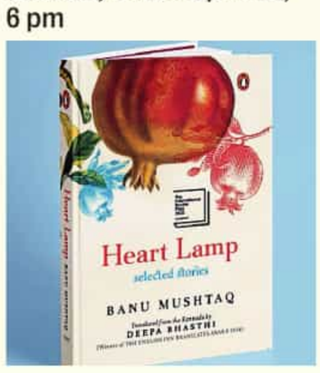
LOYA at Taj West End is hosting a special edition of its signature series 'Qissa' for Baisakhi. The evening will feature a captivating live performance by Shreyas Patkar. **Where: LOYA, Taj West End; When: April 17, 7.30 pm**

### 02 Groove on

The Honey Mustard party is back for its 12th edition with Savepuri, Marc Morais, Karun Mahtani, and Vidur Grover performing. **Where: SOCIAL, Indiranagar; When: April 19, 8 pm**

### 03 Literary journey

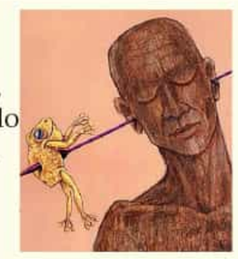
BIC is organising a conversation on 'Heart Lamp: Selected Stories', where author Banu Mushtaq will delve into fearless storytelling and her portrayal of women navigating faith, family, and societal expectations in southern India. **Where: Bangalore International Centre, Domlur; When: April 20, 6 pm**



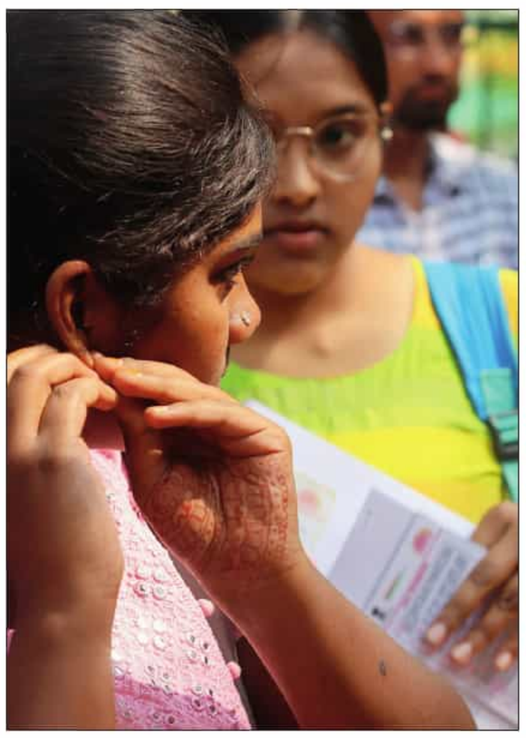

### 04 Weekend bash

The Drawing Room by Smoke House Deli is dialing up the weekend spirit with Wild West Fridays, a weekly celebration of country-inspired melodies, easygoing vibes, and exceptional food and drinks. **Where: The Drawing Room, Indiranagar; When: April 18, 8 pm**

### 05 Art exhibition



Artisera is presenting 'KARTAB', Gurmeet Marwah's first-ever solo exhibition, featuring paintings, woodcuts, and sculptures. **Where: Artisera, Indiranagar; When: April 12 to May 4**



**Exam-day vigilance**
Strict screening and security checks were conducted for the Common Entrance Test (CET) conducted in Bengaluru on Wednesday; Female students can be seen removing their jewellery, in accordance with the dress code specified for the examination

# Government eases class 1 admission age

**While parents have welcomed move, section of private schools have opposed decision, arguing that 6 years is critical developmental milestone for cognitive, emotional, and social preparedness**

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The Karnataka government has decided to relax the age criteria for Class 1 admissions for the academic year 2025-26. Previously, children had to be at least six years old to enrol in Class 1. However, under the revised policy, the minimum age requirement has been lowered to five years and six months. This move comes in response to widespread parental concerns over the previous requirement, which many felt was inflexible and did not account for individual developmental readiness.

### One-time age relaxation

School Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa announced that the age relaxation would apply only for the 2025-26 academic year. Afterwards, the age limit will revert to the mandatory 6 years as per the recommendations of the State Education Policy.

### Parents welcome age relaxation

Parents have welcomed the move, seeing it as a relief for the children who were caught in the rigid age cut-off. Pooja R, a parent from Bengaluru, expressed gratitude, stating that her child was ready for Class 1 but had to stay in pre-school due to the previous rule. Mohammed A, another parent, highlighted that the new policy recognises children's varying learning paces. He said that the age relaxation offers flexibility for those who are ready for formal schooling earlier than others.

### Government school enrolment

The Karnataka State Primary School Teachers' Association strongly supported the decision. They believe that the age reduction will boost enrolment in government schools, which aligns with their long-standing advocacy to improve both student numbers and the quality of education in these schools.

### Concerns over child development

A section of private schools have opposed the decision, arguing that age 6 is a critical developmental milestone for children's cognitive, emotional, and social preparedness. D Shashi Kumar, General Secretary of Associated Managements of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka (KAMS) said that starting school too early can lead to stress and hinder long-term academic performance. "Additionally, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the Right to Education Act set 6 years as the standard entry age, and the relaxation violates legal and data protocols already in place," he said.

# Regularise long-serving temporary employees: HC

A division bench of the Karnataka High Court, led by Justice Krishna S Dixit and Justice Ramachandra D Huddar, ruled that daily wage employees serving continuously for over ten years in sanctioned posts deserve regularisation, and procedural delays alone cannot justify denial. The petitioner served as a forest watcher/driver in the Forest Department for thirty years, performing duties equivalent to regular employees. His regularisation request was rejected through endorsements dated August 29, 2016. The Karnataka State Administrative Tribunal (KSAT) dismissed his claim on July 31, 2019, citing insufficient evidence of continuous service and non-compliance with Umadevi judgment conditions. The petitioner challenged KSAT's order through a writ petition, seeking its reversal and requesting service regularisation with monetary benefits.

The respondents contested that the engagement was not against a sanctioned post, and cited the Umadevi decision stating daily wage workers have no inherent regularisation rights. They highlighted the absence of formal appointment documentation and proper recruitment process adherence.

The court determined that KSAT erred in rejecting the claim solely on delay ground, noting that service benefits should not be based on delays.

The court referenced Jaggo vs Union of India, which established that Umadevi judgement was not meant to penalise long-serving employees fulfilling essential state functions. It also cited Vinod Kumar vs Union of India, which established that procedural formalities should not prevent regularisation of long-serving temporary employees.

The court concluded that KSAT's order was legally unsound, having failed to properly apply regularisation principles from ML Kesari and related precedents. Consequently, the court allowed the writ petition. **— BMB**

# HC mandates action against 'fake' doctors

The Karnataka High Court has instructed the state government to take immediate action to identify and shut down clinics operated by unqualified practitioners across the state.

Justice M Nagaprasanna expressed concern over the rise of unqualified individuals falsely presenting themselves as doctors. He stated that these impostors, who lack genuine medical expertise, are putting the lives of innocent rural residents at risk by establishing clinics in remote areas and deceiving unsuspecting patients. "It is ununderstandable as to how the state is in blissful ignorance towards proliferation of such clinics without initiating any action. Therefore, it is for the state to immediately act, identify such clinics and pull the curtains down of those clinics, which are run by quacks like the case at hand, all in accordance with law," he stated. The court ordered the Registry to forward the directive to the Health and Family Welfare Secretary for suitable action against clinics operated by individuals lacking medical qualifications.

The bench issued these directives whilst rejecting a petition from Dr AA Muralidharswamy, who possessed only Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) qualifications, seeking approval for his clinic registration under the Karnataka Private Medical Establishments Act, 2007, through an application dated March 25, 2024.

The petitioner claimed qualification in alternative medicine with associated privileges, presenting a certificate from the Indian Board of Alternative Medicine. He also held a Diploma in Community Medical Services with Essential Drugs, and operated Sri Lakshmi Clinic in Mandya District for several years. During proceedings, the petitioner could not produce any valid medical qualification certificates.

The court firmly stated that the petitioner, holding only an SSLC qualification, cannot claim the title of a doctor or engage in medical practice. It concluded that the requested relief cannot be granted, and the petition must be dismissed based on this observation. **— BMB**

CRIME FILES

# 22-year-old stabs family while asleep

A 22-year-old youth allegedly stabbed his parents and elder sister while they were asleep at their home in Medarahalli, under the jurisdiction of Soladevanahalli police station, in the early hours of Tuesday.

The attack took place around 3 am. The accused, identified as Harsha (22), reportedly attacked his father Krishnamurthy (51), mother Parvathamma (48), and sister Nayana (24), leaving all three critically injured. According to police, the family had recently moved into a rented house in Vinayaka Layout, Dasarahalli, just two months ago. Harsh had reportedly expressed feelings of fear and anxiety to his mother two days prior to the attack. However, his mother had refused to take him to the hospital, dismissing it as a temporary phase.

The attack was brutal and unprovoked. After allegedly stabbing his father, Harsha attacked his mother when she rushed to help. He then turned on his sister, who was sleeping in another room. The family tried to defend themselves by throwing chilly powder from the kitchen at him, but he continued his assault.

Neighbours, alerted by the victims' screams, immediately contacted the police. Soladevanahalli police arrived, broke open the locked door, and rescued the family just in time.

The three injured are being treated in the ICU of Sapthagiri hospital, and Harsh is currently undergoing treatment at a mental health centre.

A case has been registered at Soladevanahalli police station, and further investigation is underway.

# Actor Rajat detained again

Actor and former Bigg Boss contestant Rajat Kishan, who was arrested earlier after a reel showing Rajat brandishing a machete went viral.

Now has once again landed in legal trouble. Basaveshwara Nagar police took him into custody on Wednesday.

Rajat, who had previously secured conditional bail, violated court orders by failing to appear for multiple hearings. The 24th ACJM court had issued warrants against both Rajat and co-accused Vinay Gowda for non-compliance. While Rajat has now been remanded to judicial custody until April 29, Vinay was fined Rs 500 and had his warrant recalled.

Sources say police are also pursuing Vinay for further questioning. Meanwhile, Rajat, who submitted a cover letter claiming he would attend court, allegedly absconded, prompting the police to issue a notice and detain him today.

Rajat's bail plea will be heard tomorrow (April 17). Meanwhile, police plan to produce him before the court again today before transferring him to Parappana Agrahara jail.

# Shop owner killed by worker

A 60-year-old timber shop owner was murdered by a worker following a heated altercation over the victim's daughter at SB Nagar, near Outer Ring Road, under Kumaraswamy Layout police station limits on Tuesday.

The deceased, Syed Afzal, was supervising his brother's timber shop where the accused, Surya Prakash (23), had been employed for the past two years. Prakash, a resident of Ilyas Nagar, had reportedly grown close to Afzal's daughter, a relationship the latter strongly disapproved of. Afzal had previously warned Prakash multiple times to keep his distance.

According to police sources, both men arrived at the shop in an inebriated state, and a confrontation ensued over the same issue. In a fit of rage, Surya Prakash allegedly attacked Afzal with a sharp weapon, killing him on the spot inside the shop premises.

The Kumaraswamy Layout police arrested Surya Prakash shortly after the incident and have registered a case of murder. DCP (South) Lokesh Jagalsar confirmed the arrest and stated that further investigation is underway.

# Branded or not? Fake namesake

The Central Crime Branch (CCB), in collaboration with Madanayakanahalli police, busted a counterfeit fashion racket in Guddadahalli, seizing fake branded clothing worth Rs 40 lakh. The raid, carried out on a makeshift garment unit, revealed an elaborate operation replicating high-end brands like Polo and Burberry.

The crackdown followed a complaint filed by representatives of the affected brands, alerting authorities about the illegal use of their trademarks. Acting swiftly, the police traced the source to a factory where fake labels were being imprinted on locally manufactured garments and sold under the guise of luxury fashion wear.

The accused, identified as Ashraf, Sharpuddin, and Saravana, had been running this clandestine operation under the radar. During the raid, stacks of shirts, labels, and packaging materials mimicking original brand tags were discovered.

During the raid conducted by the Madanayakanahalli police, a large quantity of counterfeit shirts and garments bearing the logos of Polo and Burberry were discovered at the factory. The seized items were packed in white gunny bags, with more than five bags in total, each containing 125 pieces. It has come to light that these fake branded clothes were being passed off as genuine products in the market.

The police have taken the accused into custody, seized the counterfeit garments, and are currently interrogating them as part of the ongoing investigation. The seized goods are currently in police custody, and legal proceedings against the accused are underway.

# Arkavathy River pollution hits new low near TG Halli

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Pollution in the Arkavathy River stretch near TG Halli Reservoir has hit rock bottom, the latest water quality report of the river under the National Water Monitoring Program (NWMP) has highlighted.

The water has been classified under Class E, with a dissolved oxygen value of 2.3mg/L and a total coliform bacteria level at 1,400 MPN/100 mL.

The pollution level in the river in Kanakapura is worse, with oxygen levels as low as 1.5mg/L and higher bacterial contamination of 3,500 MPN/100 mL. The water quality report also indicates high biological oxygen demand, which is due to a large amount of organic matter, mostly from untreated sewage, being discharged directly.

As per CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board) standards, the permissible level of total Coliform organisms MPN/100ml should be 500 or less in water bodies considered suitable for bathing, contact water sport, and commercial fisheries.

Experts say the high levels of organic or inorganic pollution in the river are due to the discharge of untreated industrial effluent and sewage into the river.

"The primary cause of pollution is unabated discharge of untreated industrial effluent. The river is receiving a large amount of industrial effluent from the Peenya Industrial area. This is apart from untreated domestic sewage entering the river in the area," said a city-based water pollution expert.

Notably, officials from the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) had informed BM in the past that although the KSPCB (Karnataka State Pollution Control Board) has been apprised of the need for an effluent treatment plant (ETP) in the area, it has not materialised so far. BWSSB officials say an ETP is a must to remove industrial effluents from the water before it enters the TG Halli reservoir.

TG Halli, supplying drinking water to Bengaluru, is fitted with only a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) to treat wastewater by removing only organic pollutants and pollutants and a Water Treatment Plant for disinfection and cleaning.

Last year, a water quality analysis conducted by a city-based non-governmental organisation on samples collected from multiple points of TG Halli reservoir and Dodda Mudavadi Bridge, located 10 km upstream of the Arkavathi-Vrishabhavathi confluence showed alarming levels of heavy metals and toxic substances, including mercury, the banned pesticide DDT, cancer-causing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH), and fluoride.

# Community stands firm against Varthur's ₹482-crore flyover plan

## Citizens criticise lack of public consultation and environmental violations in flyover proposal

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Members of the Varthur Nagarikara Hita Rakshana Vedike have submitted a memorandum to Karnataka's Chief Secretary, urging the cancellation of the proposed ₹482 crore elevated corridor project in Varthur. They argue that the project has been undertaken without public consultation, transparency in planning, or adherence to legal norms.

According to the Vedike, the flyover is ill-conceived, environmentally destructive, and does not align with Bengaluru's future needs. "Proceeding with the project will waste taxpayer money, damage the environment, and set a dangerous precedent for non-transparent urban development. It poses severe and irreversible risks to the community, the ecosystem, our cultural heritage, and the long-term urban planning of the region. Through the memorandum, we have urged the government to cancel the project immediately," said Gangadhar B M, President of Varthur Nagarikara Hita Rakshana Vedike.

Notably, the proposed flyover received approval from the state cabinet of the BJP-led government in 2022. The project involves extending an existing 60-foot-wide, 1.3-km long elevated corridor by 1.9 km. Citizens in the area say that once constructed, the flyovers will only lead to more private vehicles, causing traffic congestion and pollution.

Barricaded road in Varthur reflects public pushback against proposed flyover project

> **"This project will harm the environment and bypass public interest**
> – S Gangadhar BM, President, Varthur Nagarikara Hita Rakshana Vedike

The proposal lacks future-forward urban planning, as it will saturate in a few years, eliminating possibilities for more sustainable options like metro expansion, suburban rail, or high-speed transit.

Vedike members also claim that the proposal violates the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act, 1961, which mandates public consultation and approval from local authorities before any major urban infrastructure project can be implemented. "No public consultation has been held, and citizens have been excluded from DPR preparation. Moreover, the flyover is planned inside the lake buffer zone, which is in direct violation of the Karnataka High Court's ruling. Any construction in this sensitive zone will exacerbate flood risks, groundwater depletion, and urban heat islands, violating environmental protection laws," rued a Vedike member.

As per the Nagarpalika Act, 1992, all urban development projects must be reviewed by the Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPC) before State Cabinet approval. Locals say they are opposing the project as the proposal was never placed before the MPC, making it unconstitutional. Those opposing it also claim that land acquisition for construction was done arbitrarily, without a social impact assessment.

### Loss of green cover

The project proposes the mass felling of fully grown trees, which will contribute to rising air pollution, loss of biodiversity, and urban heat islands, worsening Bengaluru's environmental crisis. "The Karnataka High Court has ruled that large-scale tree felling can only be undertaken after public consultation. Through the memorandum, we have also urged the government to hold a comprehensive public consultation that includes urban planners, environmental experts, and heritage conservationists before initiating the project," the Vedike stated.

It also demands an independent urban mobility study by agencies like DULT (Directorate of Urban Land Transport) to assess alternative solutions, along with prioritising mass public transport integration into the future mobility plan for Mahadevapura.

# New hope for little learners in city's upgraded Anganwadi

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Here's good news for children from economically disadvantaged families, especially those from waste-picking communities. Ten Anganwadi centres across Bengaluru have been upgraded with improved Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure. A formal community handover ceremony was held at the Ullal Anganwadi Centre in the Banashankari Cluster, with the remaining nine centres inaugurated virtually at the same time. Sparsha Trust, in partnership with WaterAid India under the Saamuhika Shakti initiative, and in collaboration with the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD), successfully inaugurated upgraded educational and WASH infrastructure at 10 Anganwadi centres across Bengaluru.

This initiative is part of a broader effort to strengthen Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) infrastructure by creating safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environments for children—especially those from waste-picking communities and nearby settlements. The upgraded Anganwadi are now equipped with child-friendly educational wall art, Teaching-Learning Materials (TLMs), improved handwashing stations, functional sanitation facilities, and essential Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) resources.

Anganwadi workers taking care of children while their parents are working

Sidramappa, Deputy Director, Department of Women and Child Development, and District Programme Officer Sumangala attended the function.

The following Anganwadi Centres—Siddhartha Layout, Sanjay Gandhi Nagar, Yelacheguppe, Chennenahalli, Kannahalli, Ramanna Garden, Bande Colony, Kondappa Layout, and Chamundeshwari Nagar—were also virtually inaugurated as part of the event. Anganwadi supervisors, Bal Vikas Samiti members, and community leaders were present at each centre during the inauguration. Dr Neelima introduced the inspiring work of Sparsha Trust under the Saamuhika Shakti initiative, highlighting the focus on holistic development, WASH infrastructure, and early learning support.

Gopinath R, Managing Trustee, Sparsha Trust extended heartfelt thanks to the DWCD for their continuous cooperation and support in enabling Sparsha Trust's work on the ground. Sidramappa, Deputy Director of the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD), appreciated the initiative, stating, "Now, without the burden of convent school fees, parents can confidently send their children to Anganwadi for free, quality education. Looking at the colourful Ullal Anganwadi building, one wouldn't think it's any less than a convent school!" Community leader Anil emphasised his commitment, sharing that he and his team are working toward ensuring permanent buildings for all Anganwadi in Bengaluru, promising to see it through.

> **"Parents can now confidently send their children to Anganwadi for free, quality education, and the upgraded centres are as good as any convent school!**
> – Sidramappa, Deputy Director, DWCD

Sumalatha, Project Officer at the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD), shared a compelling statistic: "Over 1,92,000 children are currently enrolled in Anganwadi across Bengaluru. Support from NGOs like Sparsha Trust provides a much-needed boost to the department's efforts to deliver quality education to every child."

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### Traffic disruption

**Rajarajeshwari Nagar**

An electric car is currently charging on the main road, with its cable extending across the footpath, directly opposite the Rajarajeshwari Police Station.

### Out of service

**Arekere**

The HDFC ATM kiosk on Arekere Main Road, near Ganesha Temple, has been out of order for over a year.

### Station mess

**Cantonment railway station**

With Cantonment railway station under construction, inadequate arrangements for arrivals and departures are causing confusion and inconvenience to commuters.

# Auto driver crushed as metro girder topples over

Negligence in Namma Metro construction continues to claim lives, with yet another incident highlighting safety lapses. In the latest mishap near Kogilu Cross around 12:05 am on Wednesday, an autorickshaw driver, Qasim Saab, lost his life after a massive viaduct girder overturned and crushed his vehicle.

Qasim was on his way to Nagawara with a passenger who had escaped unhurt. According to BMRCL (Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited) officials, the girder was being transported from the Vadiyarpura casting yard to the site at Yelahanka Kogilu Junction. The trailer truck carrying it had to brake suddenly to avoid a vehicle that cut across its path during a turn, causing the girder to topple onto the autorickshaw. Despite efforts to rescue the driver using cranes and provide medical attention, Qasim was declared dead.

Auto-rickshaw damaged after concrete pillar collapse

# Rehab owner, warden booked

The Bengaluru Rural Police have registered two separate cases against the warden and the owner of a private rehabilitation centre after a video showing an inmate being assaulted went viral on social media. The incidents occurred within the Nelamangala Rural Police Station limits.

Superintendent of Police CK Baba confirmed that a suo motu case has been registered. "We have arrested the concerned individual. The incident took place at a private rehabilitation centre. There are set practices, but there could be some mishaps. We are checking all the visuals, and we'll see what the main reason for the incident was," SP Baba said.

According to the police, one of the videos shows an inmate being physically assaulted, reportedly after he refused to wash the warden's clothes and clean.

Another viral clip shows an accused cutting a birthday cake with a dagger.

The case involving the assault has been registered, while another case has been booked under the Arms Act. Both the warden and the owner of the rehabilitation centre have been named in the FIRs.

Police have confirmed that the victim has since recovered and has been discharged from the facility. The investigation is ongoing, with authorities reviewing CCTV footage to determine further culpability. **-ANI**

# Scam numbers soar, few know how to report

**Over 2 lakh scam reports have been submitted via Sanchar Saathi portal, but officials say most citizens remain unaware of its existence; K'taka alone flagged 14,026 numbers, with action taken on over 11,000 cases**

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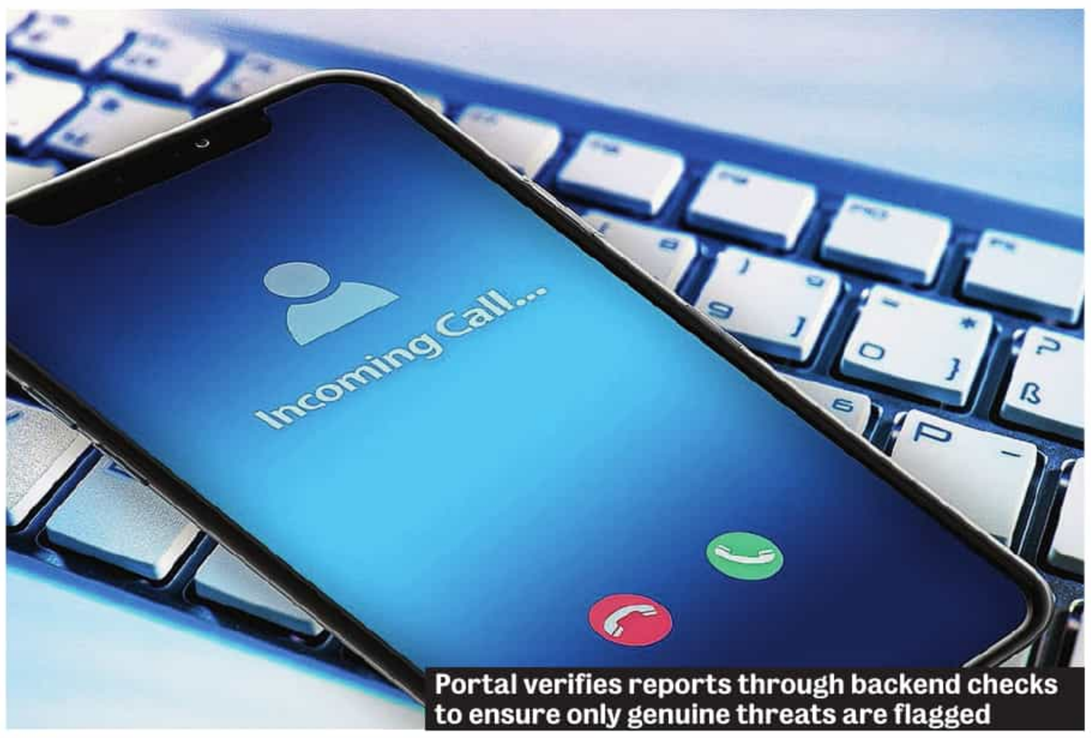


Portal verifies reports through backend checks to ensure only genuine threats are flagged

Police authorities reveal that many victims are unaware of the existence of the portal where scam numbers can be reported.

In a significant crackdown on telecom fraud, the Department of Telecommunications' Sanchar Saathi portal has received over 2 lakh inputs from citizens across India, flagging suspected scams and fraudulent communications. These include suspicious mobile numbers, SMS messages, and fake WhatsApp accounts aimed at defrauding users.

As of March 2025, more than 2.5 lakh fraudulent numbers have been blocked based on these reports to prevent further scam-related activities.

The state-wise data reveals that Delhi leads the chart with the highest number of reported fake numbers, with 25,020 such numbers reported. Karnataka, on the other hand, reported 14,026 fraudulent numbers reported, and actions taken on 11,776 of those, including blocking and deactivations.

## How it works

The crackdown is facilitated by Chakshu, a citizen-centric feature of the Sanchar Saathi portal. It enables users to report suspected fraudulent communications such as fake calls or messages about bank accounts, payment wallets, SIM issues, gas/electricity connections, fraudulent KYC updates, expiry or deactivation alerts, impersonation attempts posing as government officials or relatives and extortion threats and other deceptive tactics

It was launched with the objective of allowing citizens to report suspicious phone numbers, enabling authorities to monitor and block potential scam activities. Once a number is reported, the portal conducts its due diligence before taking action, as false reporting is always a possibility. The system performs backend verification to ensure only genuine threats are flagged, offering a safeguard for others.

## Many unaware of the portal

However, a major challenge remains in spreading awareness about such initiatives. In an age dominated by social and digital media, public attention toward awareness campaigns is often limited.

"People tend to ignore these kinds of alerts, assuming it only matters if you're the victim. That's the root of the problem," said Kuldeep Kumar Jain, Joint Commissioner of Police (Admin), Bengaluru. He further emphasised the broader issue of public indifference, noting, "It's the same with emergency services, nearly 50 per cent of people are still unaware that 112 is the existing emergency number for all types of emergencies. Many still believe it's 100 for police. Despite continuous efforts by government departments and authorities, the awareness doesn't translate into public understanding because people don't see it as important in their daily lives."

### Important resources for reporting fraudulent communications

For reporting suspected fraud calls, SMS, or WhatsApp messages
Use the Sanchar Saathi Portal (Chakshu feature) to report suspicious or spam numbers

**Portal:** https://sancharsaathi.gov.in

**Note:** Chakshu is specifically designed to report suspected fraud or scam communications. It does not handle cases involving actual financial loss or cybercrime.

**If you've already fallen victim to a fraud**

Cyber Crime Helpline: **1930**

Cyber Crime Reporting Portal: **https://www.cybercrime.gov.in**

If you've lost money or are a victim of any cybercrime, immediately contact the helpline or report the incident online.

# Public funds siphoned, ED acts

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Bengaluru Zonal Office, on Saturday arrested R Leelavathy, former Managing Director of the Karnataka Bhovi Development Corporation (KBDC), under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

As per the official release, Leelavathy has been found involved in money laundering by fraudulently creating fake bank accounts to siphon off public funds for personal gain. She was produced before the PMLA court and has been remanded to ED custody for seven days.

Prior to the arrest, the ED had carried out search operations at multiple locations in Bengaluru, including the KBDC office at VV Towers and Leelavathy's residence. During the search, the agency seized incriminating documents, digital evidence, and property records linked to proceeds of crime.

Investigations revealed that Leelavathy, in collusion with other officials, including BK Nagarajappa (then General Manager of KBDC) and Subbappa (then Superintendent), played a central role in the diversion of funds from KBDC by opening fake accounts in the names of non-existent entities. The misappropriated funds were routed through these accounts and further transferred to friends and family members.

The ED has found that several fake bank accounts were created and a large number of intended beneficiaries were cheated through a well-planned modus operandi. Earlier, BK Nagarajappa has been arrested and is currently in ED custody for 14 days.

Evidence also points to the use of accounts belonging to Leelavathy's late sister, Mangala Ramu, and others, to layer and integrate the laundered funds into the financial system using bogus entities. Further investigation is still underway.

# Youth assaults seven after flashing

A youth flashed at a woman, and, when confronted, he assaulted seven people, including her husband, police said on Wednesday.

The incident occurred on April 13. The accused also assaulted his mother when she questioned him.

A case has been registered at the Shivajinagar police station, and police have launched a manhunt for the accused, who fled the scene after the incident.

According to the police, the accused has been identified as Karthik. He allegedly unzipped his pants and flashed at a homemaker while she was walking on the second floor of her house.

The accused lived in a house opposite the victim's residence. Disturbed by the act, the woman raised an alarm and called her husband for help.

Outraged by this, the accused began assaulting the husband. When neighbours rushed to intervene, the accused attacked them with hollow blocks, flower pots, window panes, according to police. He even assaulted his mother when she tried to stop him.

# Cardiac cases soar at Jayadeva Institute clinics

## Post-COVID effects and poor lifestyle choices fuel alarming rise in heart cases

Sridhar Vivan
sridhar.vivan@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @sridharvMirror

Jayadeva sees a rise in heart surgies rise due to lifestyle , after post-COVID impact

Cardiac cases have surged dramatically, as evidenced by data from 2020 to 2024 at Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research. Bypass surgeries rose by 134.3%, cardiac surgeries increased by 155.4%, outpatient visits skyrocketed by 2,095.4%, and inpatient admissions grew by 1,676.3%.

In the last year alone, over 8.21 lakh patients sought outpatient care across Jayadeva's centres in Bengaluru, Mysuru, Kalaburagi, ESI Hospital in Rajajinagar, and KC General Hospital. Of these, 76,707 were admitted for inpatient treatment, and 4,922 underwent heart surgeries. This marks a stark contrast to 2013, when only 3.76 lakh OPD visits were recorded, with 35,000 admissions and 2,900 surgeries.

Doctors attribute this steep rise to a mix of lifestyle factors and post-COVID health complications. "Sudden cardiac arrests, even while driving or dancing, are becoming more frequent due to unassessed heart capacity and excessive physical exertion," said Dr Ajay Kaul of Fortis Hospital, Noida. He stressed the need for medical check-ups before undertaking intense workouts, along with adopting a balanced lifestyle and stress management.

**Outpatient and inpatient numbers at Jayadeva(2021-25)**

| Year | Out Patients At Jayadeva Institute | In Patients At Jayadeva Institute | Cardiac Surgeries | By-Pass Surgeries |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 39,158 | 4,200 | 1,927 | 798 |
| 2022 | 5,27,437 | 5,383 | 3,485 | 1,352 |
| 2023 | 6,55,484 | 68,902 | 4,586 | 1,608 |
| 2024 | 7,67,539 | 74,653 | 4,733 | 1,793 |
| 2025 | 8,21,224 | 74,707 | 4,922 | 1,870 |

Dr KS Ravindranath, Director of Jayadeva Institute, highlighted that government health schemes such as Ayushman Bharat and Arogya Karnataka have made cardiac care accessible to low- and middle-income patients, who would otherwise struggle with the high costs at private hospitals. He urged every government medical college to establish dedicated cardiology departments and called on private hospitals to extend treatment under public health schemes.

Cardiac surgeries at Jayadeva institute saw a substantial growth increasing by 155,4% from 1,927 procedures in 2020 to 4,922 in 2024. There was 81% spike in 2021, followed by rises of 31.6% in 2022, 3.2% in 2023, and 4% in 2024. Bypass procedures followed a similar pattern, rising by 134% increasing from 798 in 2020 to 1,870 in 2024, with the sharpest rise in 2021, 18.9% in 2022, 11.5% in 2023, and 4.3% in 2024, reflecting a significant surge in critical interventions at the institute. A renowned cardiologist noted that most patients who report heart issues either had COVID-19 or lead unhealthy lifestyles.

> **"Sudden cardiac arrests, even while driving or dancing, are becoming more common due to unassessed heart capacity and excessive physical exertion**
> – Dr Ajay Kaul of Fortis Hospital, Noida

Experts warn that over 50% of cardiac patients neither exercise for even 20–30 minutes daily nor follow heart-healthy habits. Smoking, alcohol consumption, and unchecked stress remain key contributors to the growing burden of heart disease.

# Global volunteers build homes for tribal families

## Habitat for humanity leads in life- changing mission to create secure homes

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Volunteers and future homeowners join hands to build safe, stable housing in Bengaluru's Hakki-Pikki Colony

Business leaders and international students joined hands with three tribal families in the Hakki-Pikki Colony in Anekal, Bangalore, to construct safe, permanent homes in a five-day Legacy Build. The volunteers worked with Habitat for Humanity India, a housing non-profit organisation, to help realise its vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live.

The build was led by Anthony Miller, volunteer leader of Habitat for Humanity's Asia-Pacific Development Council, and Cecilia Melin, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity Japan. The volunteer group included some of their family members, friends, and students from Habitat Japan's campus chapters. "Each build is a powerful reminder of the impact a home can have on a family," said Miller, who has now participated in 17 global builds, including three in India. "Housing transforms lives by providing security and stability. A Habitat build allows us to witness that transformation first-hand. I'm glad we could help families move closer to their dream of owning a home, and I'm especially happy my daughter could be part of this experience."

Future homeowner Parani expressed her joy: "My family is looking forward to our new home, but the most excited is my granddaughter, who is expecting a baby. She will raise her child in a safe and secure home."

Anand Kumar Bolimera, National Director of Habitat for Humanity India, said research shows that adequate and affordable housing leads to improved economic, health, and education outcomes. "We are grateful for volunteers including business leaders and students who partner with local communities. They serve as champions for housing and advocates for sustainable change," he said. Since 2003, Habitat for Humanity India's volunteer build programme has engaged over 56,000 individuals. Volunteers work alongside families to address local housing needs, contribute to sustainable solutions, and inspire action for housing in communities across India and beyond.

> **"Housing transforms lives by providing security and stability and a Habitat build gives us an opportunity to witness that transformation first hand**
> – Anthony Miller, Habitat for Humanity's Asia-Pacific Development Council.

IN BRIEF

## Vokkaligas slam caste census

The Rajya Vokkaligara Meesalathi Horata Samithi on Wednesday opposed the caste census, terming it unscientific, and urged the state government to reject the socio-economic and educational survey report and conduct a fresh one.

Dr GN Srikantaiah, president of the Samithi, told reporters that the 2015 caste census, led by then Karnataka State Backward Classes Commission Chairperson H Kantharaju, was outdated and inaccurate. He stressed the need for a new survey, citing a decade of socio-economic changes. He claimed the survey underreported the Vokkaliga population as 10.3 per cent, instead of the actual 15–16 per cent, and said tools like Aadhaar and geo-tagging could have improved accuracy. He demanded 12 per cent reservation for Vokkaligas, alleging they had been side lined for three decades. Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar held talks with Congress legislators from the Vokkaliga community and said their collective views on the caste census would be presented to the Cabinet on April 17. — BMB

## CBI probe sought again

The Karnataka High Court on Wednesday issued notice to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his wife, and others in response to an appeal filed by RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna, seeking a CBI probe into the MUDA site allotment case. Siddaramaiah is facing allegations of irregularities in the allotment of 14 sites by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) to his wife, Parvathi B M. The appeal challenges a February 7 order by a single-judge bench that rejected the plea to transfer the investigation from the Lokayukta police to the CBI.

A division bench of Chief Justice N V Anjaria and Justice K V Aravind directed the notice be made returnable on April 28, when related appeals are also listed. The single judge had ruled that the Lokayukta investigation showed no bias or deficiency and found no grounds to warrant a CBI probe, citing the institution's autonomy and independence as upheld by higher courts. — BMB

## SHRC penalises errant PSIs

The Karnataka State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has found two police sub-inspectors (PSI), Harish, presently serving at the Chelur police station and retired PSI, Papanna, guilty of mishandling a gang rape case involving a 13-year-old girl in Chelur, Chikkaballapura district. The incident took place in January 2023, when the minor girl was allegedly gang raped and impregnated by two juvenile relatives. Despite the seriousness of the case, the police delayed registering the FIR. The SHRC inquiry revealed that the officers violated multiple POCSO procedures. The Commission imposed a fine of ₹50,000 on each, to be deducted from their salaries. — BMB

# Karnataka truckers stir enters day 2

## Transport Minister hints at action, blames 'politics'

As the truckers' strike entered its second day in the state, Karnataka Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said he would wait for one more day, possibly hinting at initiating stringent action.

The minister also claimed that "politics was involved in the strike", noting that the truckers did not "blame the Centre" but held the state government accountable.

"We have already held talks with the truck owners. Their main demand is to reduce the price of diesel and remove tolls in the state. Is it enough if tolls are removed only in our state? Shouldn't the central government also remove tolls?" Reddy asked while speaking to reporters in Kalaburagi on Wednesday.

He said the Centre had been continuously increasing diesel prices, but the truckers did not launch any agitation at the time.

"What is the reason that the truckers, who were quiet when the Centre hiked fuel prices, are now going on strike? You should think it over," the minister said.

According to him, there has been no impact on the transportation of daily necessities such as milk, groceries, and medicines.

When asked about the next course of action, he said, "Let one more day pass".

He added that he was confident the truck drivers would call off the strike.

Meanwhile, the truckers said all the points raised by the minister had already been discussed in their meeting with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

"Our strike is ongoing. We expect something concrete to come out tomorrow. Ramalinga Reddy is our Minister, and he is pro-people. Let's see," Somasundaram Balan, secretary of the Federation of Karnataka State Lorry Owners and Agents Associations (FOKSLOAA), said while speaking to PTI in Bengaluru.

The association launched the strike, condemning the fuel price hike and alleging the harassment they face at toll plazas.

FOKSLOAA is an umbrella organisation of 129 truckers associations with six lakh members—drivers, agents and truck owners. **–PTI**

IN FOCUS
TRUCKERS' STRIKE

**Vegetable stocks pile at Kalasipalyam Vegetable Market, on Wednesday, day 2 of the lorry strike**

IN SUPREME COURT

# Waqf Act: 'Concerned about violence'

The Supreme Court on Wednesday indicated that it may pass interim order to stay certain key provisions of the recently passed Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, and also expressed concern over violence in West Bengal's Murshidabad district.

A three-judge bench of Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justices PV Sanjay Kumar and KV Viswanathan said, "The one thing is very disturbing the violence that is taking place. The issue is before the court and we will decide." The bench didn't pass any order but suggested that may stay certain provision including the inclusion of non-Muslims in Central Waqf Council and Waqf Boards, powers of collectors on deciding dispute over Waqf properties and provisions on de-notifying properties declared as waqf by courts.

The apex court was hearing a batch of petitions challenging the Constitutional validity of Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

During the hearing, the bench said that it is considering passing an interim order which will balance equities.

"We will say – Whichever properties were declared by court to be Waqf will not be de-notified or be treated as non Waqf, whether it is Waqf by user or not. Second, Collector can continue with proceedings, but the proviso will not be given effect to. Third, Regarding Waqf Boards and Council... ex officio members can be appointed but the other members have to Muslims," said the bench. **ANI**

**Security personnel deploy at Dhuliyan of Jangipur subdivision following violence that broke out during a protest against Waqf (Amendment) Act 2025, in Murshidabad on Monday**

### Kancha Gachibowli: Restore forest

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the Wildlife Warden of Telangana to examine and take immediate steps to protect the wildlife affected on account of deforestation in 100 acres of land in Kancha Gachibowli in Telangana.

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and AG Masih made it clear that not even a single tree should be felled in the area.

It also warned Telangana authorities about sending its officers responsible for deforestation to a "temporary prison" in the "very same spot" if the state justifies the felling of trees.

"If you (State) try to justify then... Better course would be to come up with a plan to restore the forest," Justice Gavai told senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Telangana. **ANI**

### EC panel plea hearing on May 14

The Supreme Court on Wednesday fixed May 14 for hearing on a clutch of petitions challenging the law passed by the Parliament, which excludes the Chief Justice of India (CJI) from the process of appointment of top officials of the Election Commission.

After advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing on behalf of NGO, the Association for Democratic Reforms, mentioned the matter for urgent hearing, a bench headed by Justice Surya Kant said that it would hear next month the pleas challenging the validity of the Chief Election Commissioner and the other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Condition of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023.

AROUNDTHEWORLD

## Maldives bars Israeli travellers

The Maldives has changed its immigration law to bar people from entering the country with Israeli passports in a show of outrage over the war in Gaza.

The amendment was passed by Parliament on Monday and approved by President Mohamed Muizzu on Tuesday, according to a statement from the president's office.

The Maldives immigration service clarified that Israeli citizens who have a second passport would be able to enter the country. **AP**

## Trump curbs on news agencies

Fresh from a courtroom loss over The Associated Press' access to the presidency, the White House on Tuesday put forward a new media policy that sharply curtails access to Donald Trump by news agencies that serve media outlets around around the world.

It was the latest attempt by the new administration to control coverage of its activities. The move would block the AP and other wire services that serve billions of readers through thousands of news outlets. **AP**

## Brace for slump, WTO warns

**Chinese made cars, including Volvo and other brands, are seen at the port in Nanjing**

The World Trade Organization sharply cut its forecast for global merchandise trade from solid growth to a decline on Wednesday, saying further U.S. tariffs and spillover effects could lead to the heaviest slump since the height of the COVID pandemic.

The WTO said it expected trade in goods to fall by 0.2% this year, down from its expectation in October of 3.0% expansion. It said its new estimate was based on measures in place at the start of this week. **Reuters**

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# Only nasties in this method

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The experimenter records the time that the animal spends swimming and the time that they spends floating in the water.

Researchers believe that when an antidepressant drug is administered to the animal before the FST, the animal may swim or struggle for longer and spend less time floating or remaining still. This is taken to mean that longer swimming times indicate a less "depressed" animal and that the antidepressant is what caused the behavior change. Animals that spent more time immobile were thought to be in "despair," as if they had "given up".

However, PETA alleges that this interpretation is incorrect and experimenters have been using this procedure to make uninformed determinations about an animal's mood and to use these determinations to make potentially false inferences about biology related to human health.

Some experimenters claim that when animals spend more time floating (as opposed to trying to escape), they're more "depressed"—despite evidence to the contrary—and often use the test in an attempt to model human depression or test antidepressant drugs.

According to Anjana Aggarwal, science policy advisor at PETA, the Committee for Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals (CCSEA) is the agency that can impose a blanket ban on the test.

"The Pharmacy Council of India needs to ensure that research practices are not cruel by adopting policies that replace cruel animal experiments with advanced, non-animal methodologies. Over the last decade, progressive decisions by other regulatory bodies, such as banning dissection and animal experimentation in undergraduate and postgraduate zoology and life sciences courses, have saved millions of animals while promoting compassionate education and innovation. We have also approached CCSEA to consider the issue and impose a ban on this test," said Aggarwal.

## Incredibly cruel

Animal welfare activists claim the forced swim test is not scientifically credible and is deliberately cruel. It has already been abandoned or banned outright by most of the world's major pharmaceutical companies and several academic institutions, and government jurisdictions

Notably, many foreign organisations and institutes have banned FST.

In 2023, AgResearch, a New Zealand government research institute that oversees the use of animals in experimentation for more than 40 other institutions in the country, revised its legally binding code of conduct to state its ethics.

Many foreign universities, such as La Trobe University (Australia), have prohibited FST from modeling human depression, anxiety disorders, and their treatment. The UK has also barred the use of FST, a model of human depression and for studies of anxiety and its treatment.

# Footpath work is choking trees

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

was in good condition," said Balaji Raghotham, an environmentalist.

He said that KR Puram Rising volunteers had planted the saplings on the service road a few years ago and nurtured them to go into trees all these years.

"It is quite disgusting to see that the contractor and the BBMP engineer do not have even the basic knowledge on the importance of percolation pits around the trees," he said.

Coming down heavily on the BBMP authorities for putting concrete around the trees, N Nagesh, president of KR Puram Auto Drivers' Association, said that he had cautioned the workers and the contractor to leave the space around the trees for percolation of rainwater but in vain.

"I do not know what made the BBMP engineer take up development of the footpath which was in good condition. The BBMP engineer must direct the contractor to remove the concrete around the trees to ensure percolation of rainwater," Nagesh said.

Demanding the BBMP authorities to ensure the space around the trees for percolation of rainwater, M Sreeram, known for planting thousands of saplings and nurturing them to grow into trees, said the BBMP Forest Department officials must visit the spot to guide the contractor and the ward engineer on the importance of percolation pits.

BBMP Forest Range Officer (East) Chidanand told BM hat he has received a complaint against the contractor for putting concrete around the trees without leaving the space for percolation of rainwater. "I am trying to reach out to the contractor and the BBMP engineer. I will ensure the contractor creates space for percolation of rainwater," he said.

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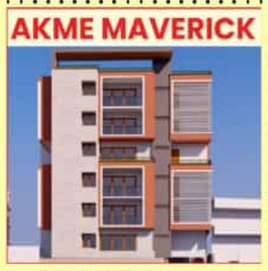

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## personal

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**I,** Navaneetha Hombali B N R/o #409 17th Cross Saraswathinagar Vijayanagar B'lore-560040 have changed my minor daughter name from Dhruthi Chidananda Naikar to Dhruthi Navaneetha Hombali.

**I,** Rajneesh Kashyap R/o C-1101, Ncc Urban Mayfair, Doddaballapur Main Road, Yelahanka, Bengaluru - 560064 have changed my minor son's name from Samvid Borthakur to Samvid Borah Kashyap.

**I,** Susmitha Sukumar Shetty w/o Arvind R Mandali, R/o #614 1st Floor, Wing-6 Sobha Dew Flower Apts Sarakki, JP Nagar 1st Phase, Bengaluru-560078 have changed my name to Sushmitha Shetty Mandali for all Purposes.

**I,** ABIDA BEGUM residing at No.43, 10th Cross Kuppa Swamy Layout, behind HKBK college Nagavara, Bangalore North, Bengaluru-560045. I have changed my name to AABIDHA. Vide affidavit dated 16/04/2025 sworn before notary. N KANCHIVARA DARAJU Bangalore.

**I,** Suman B.C., Residing at New No. 43, 36th A cross, Old No. 2676, 9th block, jayanagar, Bangalore - 560069, Have changed my name to Vijay Ranjan Suparna, vide affidavit dated 16/04/2025 sworn before Notary Aravind Patil G.G Bangalore

**I,** Gurumeetsingh Oberoi R/O Flat No C-007, Ground Floor, Block C, Amruthahalli,Blr-560092 changed my name from Gurmeet Singh Oberoi to Gurumeetsingh Oberoi for all future purpose.

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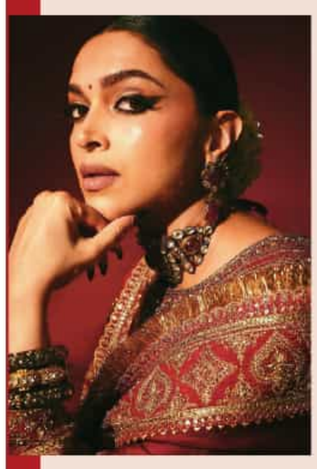
# Starry blues

## Bollywood celebs who took a break after mental health issues

B-Town has become more open about mental health issues. In fact, several actors have placed their mental health first and no hesitated to take a break when they needed to. Here are some actors who went ahead and did it even at the peak of their careers. **-ETimes**

### Deepika Padukone



Deepika Padukone's battle with depression in 2014 was a turning point—not just for her, but for mental health advocacy in India. After experiencing prolonged episodes of sadness, helplessness, and lack of motivation, she sought professional help and took a break from work commitments. In 2015, she founded The Live Love Laugh Foundation, aiming to destigmatise mental illness and raise awareness. Deepika continues to speak openly about her journey, becoming a beacon of hope for millions.

### Anushka Sharma

Anushka Sharma has spoken publicly about her experiences with anxiety, calling for greater awareness and acceptance. She revealed that she was getting treatment for anxiety and emphasised the importance of not seeing mental illness as a taboo. Her decision to be transparent not only helped break the stigma but also empowered fans to seek help themselves.

### Shraddha Kapoor

Shraddha Kapoor once opened up about dealing with anxiety for years without fully understanding it. She started experiencing physical symptoms around the time of her hit Aashiqui 2, which led to a series of medical tests—all of which came back normal. It was only later that she realised her body was reacting to unresolved mental health struggles. Her openness added to the growing chorus of Bollywood stars speaking their truth.

### Nargis Fakhri

In 2016, Nargis Fakhri surprised fans when she took a sudden break and moved back to the US. The actress later revealed that the decision stemmed from mental and emotional exhaustion. She felt overwhelmed by the chaos of the industry and needed time to reconnect with herself. Her honesty about feeling burnt out struck a chord with many young professionals in high-pressure fields.

### Karan Johar

Famed director and talk show host Karan Johar once admitted to battling intense anxiety and even experiencing panic attacks. He credited therapy and support from friends as vital in getting through that dark phase. Karan's vulnerability was a bold move in a space where male celebrities rarely speak about their emotions.

# Ananya is Chanel ambassador

Ananya Panday has been announced as the first Indian brand ambassador for the French luxury fashion brand, Chanel.

The 26-year-old is also the only Indian to hold this position with the iconic label, which was founded by Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel in 1910.

On Wednesday, the 'Call Me Bae' actress took to her Instagram account to share the exciting news, expressing her happiness about the new journey.

"Beyond grateful and excited for my journey with @chanelofficial. The first-ever brand ambassador for and from India. Dreams really do come true," she wrote.

Her appointment comes after she made an appearance at the Chanel Spring-Summer show during Paris Fashion Week last year. She had walked the ramp for designer Rahul Mishra's 'Superheroes' collection, which marked her debut at the prestigious fashion event.

Meanwhile, on the work front, the actress was last seen in Kesari Chapter 2, which stars Akshay Kumar and R. Madhavan. **-ANI**

## SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

### Firefly trailer unveiled

The much-awaited film Firefly is scheduled for release on April 24, Dr Rajkumar's birthday. The trailer of Firefly was unveiled at Karunada Chakravarthy Dr Shivarajkumar's residence on Sunday. The trailer shows Dr Shivarajkumar as a pizza delivery boy.

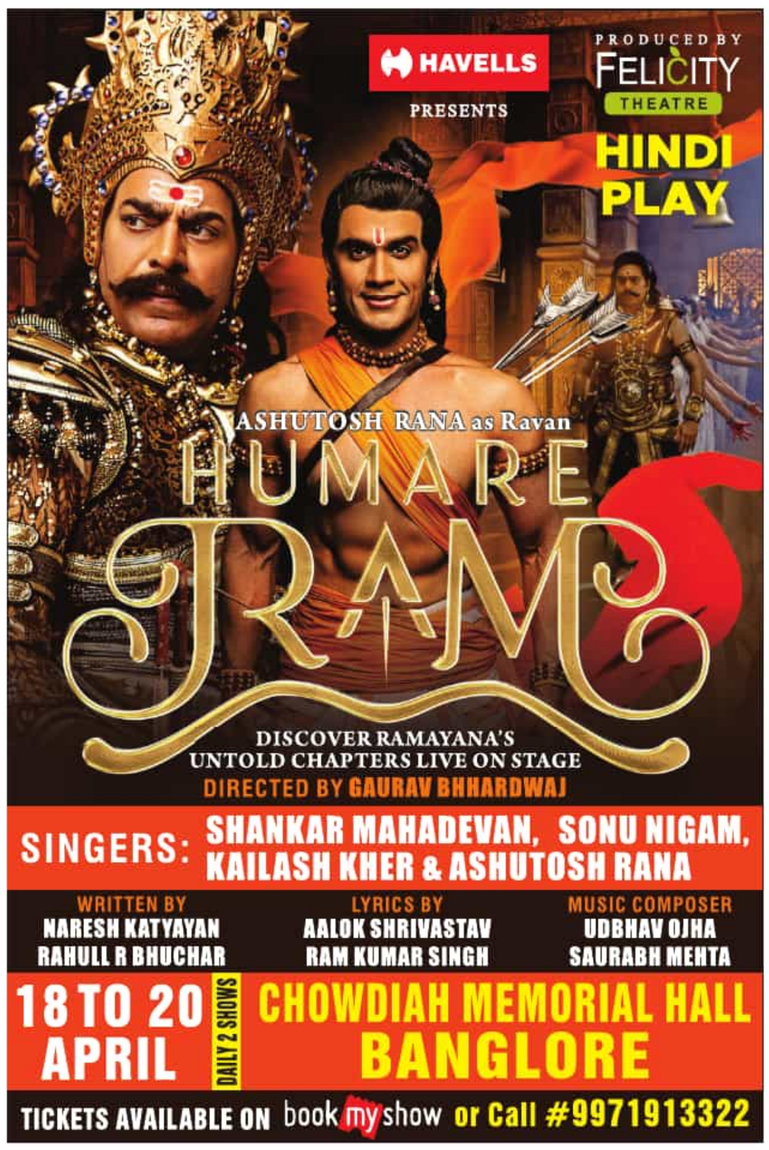
Dr Shivarajkumar said he was very happy with his daughter Niveditha who has bankrolled Firefly. "I appreciate Vamshi for writing such a script. I want more and more newcomers to enter Sandalwood," Dr Shivarajkumar said. Geeta Shivarajkumar said newcomers have made an attempt to prove their mettle in Sandalwood. Niveditha Shivarajkumar said she was very happy to release this movie on her grandfather Dr Rajkumar's birthday. "I believe that audiences will encourage and support good quality movies.," she said.

### Miracle maker

The team of film Kora has been busy with the preparations for the release of the movie on April 18. A pre-release event was held at MMB Legacy on Saturday. Tanisha Kuppanda, Rajath, Salaga Soori, Sanjay Gowda, AK Murthy, and Ramesh graced the event.

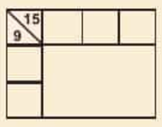
Kora is bankrolled by P Murthy under the Rathnamma Movies banner and helmed by Orata Shree. It is said the movie revolves around the Kora tribal community. Thanking the guests, Murthy said, "I am a devotee of Koragajja. I have experienced miracles during the shooting of this movie. Many movies belonging to family and action genres have been made in Kannada but Kora is different," said Murthy.

He said the Kannada version of the movie will be released on April 18.

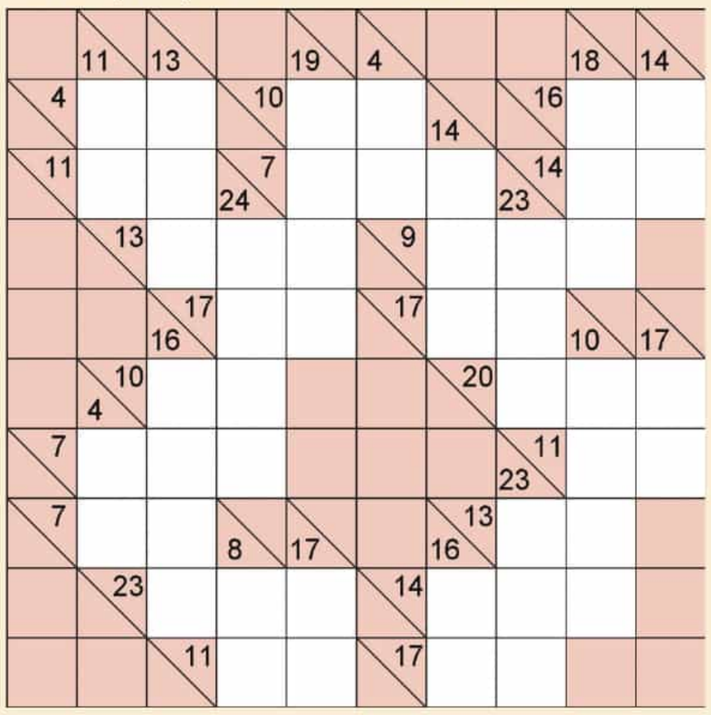


## Kakuro

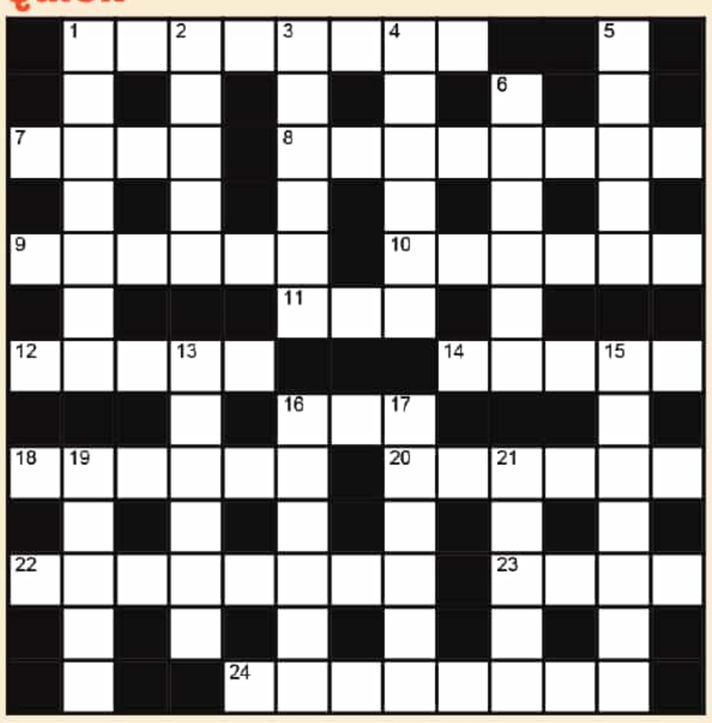
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



## Quick



**ACROSS**

1 Christened or named (8)
7 Chicken curry native to Karnataka (4)
8 Convict (8)
9 Large wading birds (6)
10 Capital of Manipur (6)
11 Musical aptitude (3)
12 Search for weapons (5)
14 __ __ large : generally speaking? (2,3)
16 Stomach muscles (3)
18 Going steady (6)
20 Bad-mouth (6)
22 Huge (8)
23 Carnivorous mammal (4)
24 Delayed or hampered (8)

**DOWN**

1 Cured herring? (7)
2 Previous (5)
3 Levy or inflict on (6)
4 Panacea, nostrum (6)
5 Norse goddess of love (5)
6 ___ with : act in accordance with? (6)
13 Man on a ship (6)
15 Fussed over details (7)
16 Tennis star Andre ___ (6)
17 Looked happy (6)
19 Get ___ with : have good understanding, etc. with? (5)
21 Further down (5)

## Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

**Today's CLUE: C EQUALS G**

PJ WZD BQU EL HRBA P HBOA, P'II ALII WZD. P HBOA LTLMWARPOC.

## Linemaro

You look like Katrina Kaif's sister

## Mindchow

A hero is a man who is afraid to run away

## Joke of the day

Q: Your date's had a great shock, now she's fainted. According to experts, you should loosen her clothing, and do one other thing. What? A: Send a postcard requesting an ambulance.

## Loop

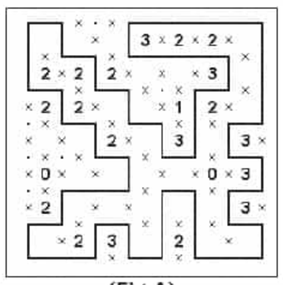
**Rules**

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

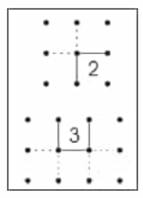
**How to begin:**

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

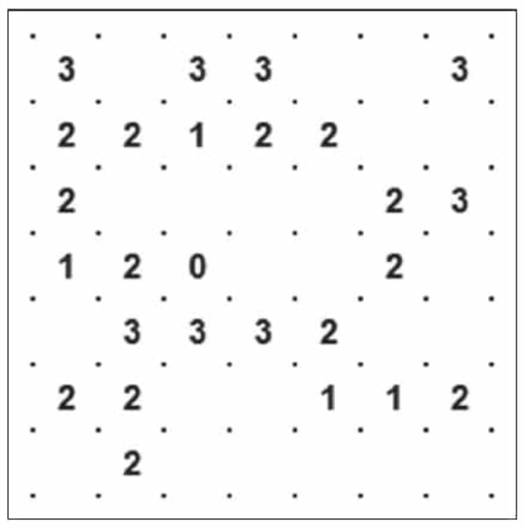
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



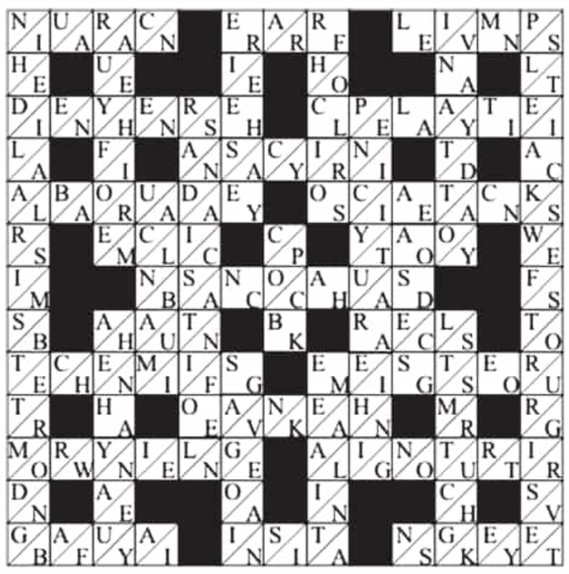
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



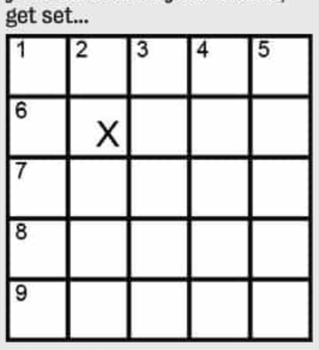
## Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

## Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



**ACROSS**

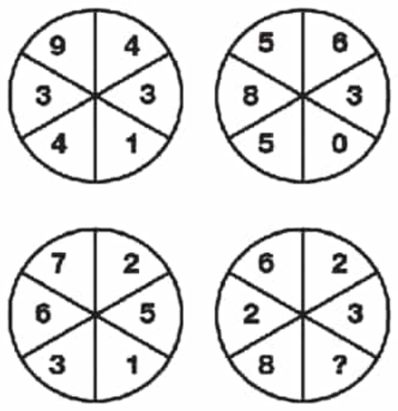
1 Tress; 6 Pelex;
7 Trays; 8 Aries;
9 Rag we

**DOWN**

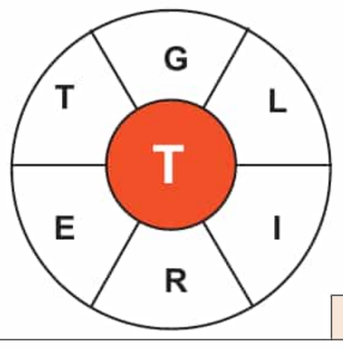
1 Wears; 2 Taxer;
3 Prigs; 4 See at;
5 Lyres

## Mensapuzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?



## Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

**10** Average; **12** Good; **14** Outstanding

## SudokuChallenge

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | | 7 | | 4 | 5 | | 8 | |
| 9 | | | 1 | | 7 | 2 | | |
| | | | | | 2 | | 3 | 9 |
| | 8 | | | | | | | 2 |
| | | 6 | | | | 3 | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | 7 | |
| 6 | 4 | | 5 | | | | | |
| | | 5 | 7 | | 4 | | | 3 |
| | 7 | | 6 | 2 | | 4 | | 1 |

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

## Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

**Easy** = 12

5 5 6 8

**Medium** = 10

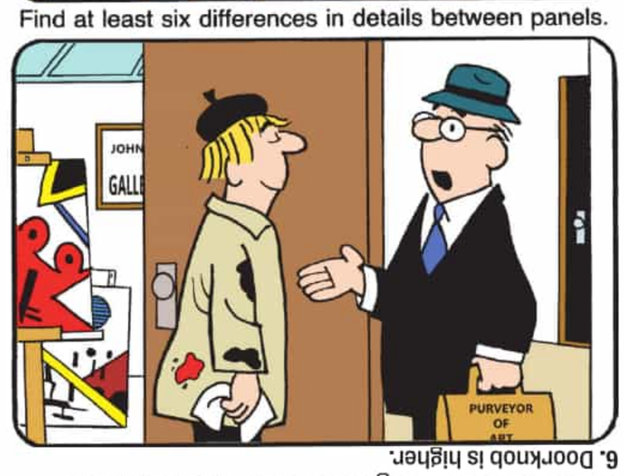
2 4 6 8

**Hard** = 23

3 7 9 7

## Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



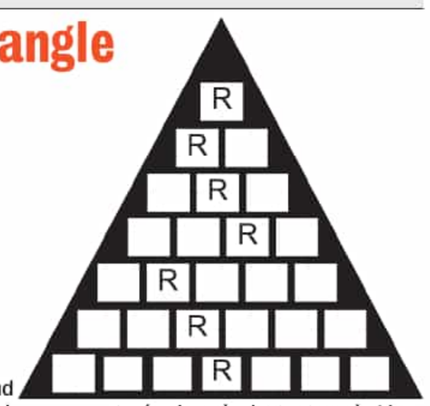

**Differences:** 1. Hand is moved. 2. Tie is different. 3. Door is moved. 4. Sign is lower. 5. Beret is smaller. 6. Doorknob is higher.

## Riddler

Fill in the blank with a word that rhymes with one of these three words, is a synonym of another one of the three words and is an anagram of the last of the three word. Earth

## Alpha triangle

1 18th letter
2 Radium symbol
3 Curved line
4 Wagon
5 Track down
6 Syndicate
7 Bright red



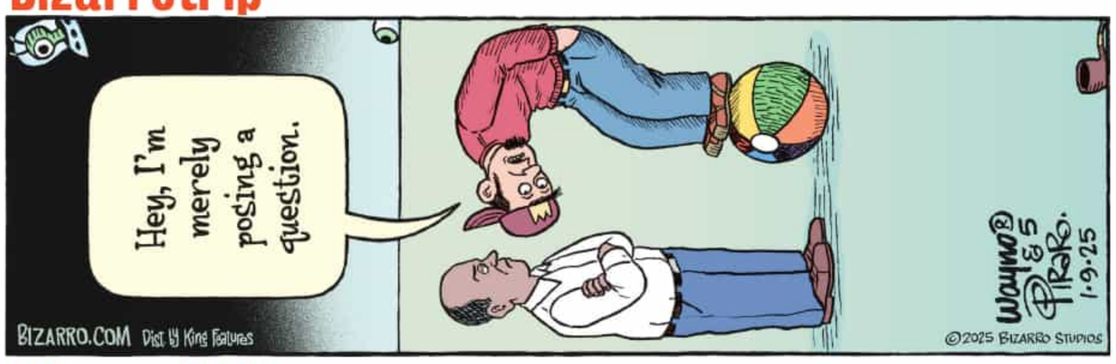

Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

# COMICS

## Popeye

## Bizarrotrip



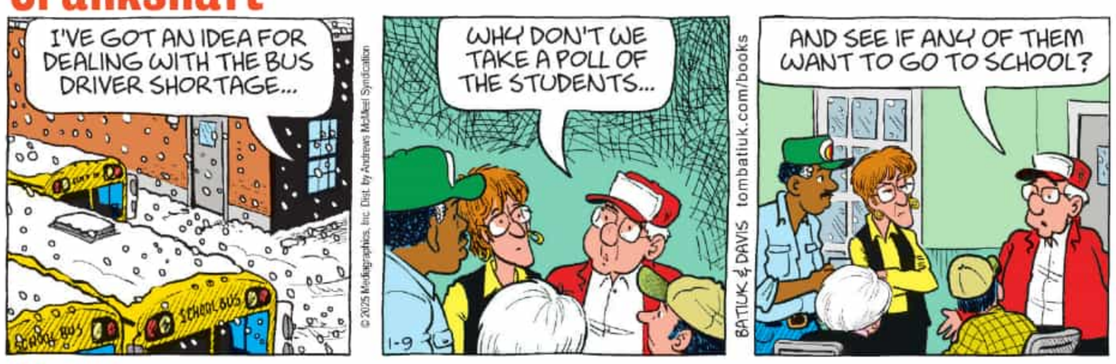

## Diamond Lil

LARRY SUFFERED AN UNTIMELY DEATH
HE WAS CRUSHED BY A GRANDFATHER CLOCK
SEE WHAT I DID THERE?
THANK YOU, LIL
©2025 creators.com 1/9
www.creators.com

## Hart of the city

YOU CAN CONTINUE TO WEAR YOUR POSSIBLY POPCORN, POSSIBLY FLOWER SKIRT...
...OR YOU CAN TRY SOMETHING NEW.
WAY AHEAD OF YOU. SEE YOU AT THE FITTING ROOM.
BOOT CUT
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@COMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

## Crankshaft


I'VE GOT AN IDEA FOR DEALING WITH THE BUS DRIVER SHORTAGE...
WHY DON'T WE TAKE A POLL OF THE STUDENTS...
AND SEE IF ANY OF THEM WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL?
SCHOOL BUS
© 2025 Mediagraphics, Inc. Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication
BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books
1-9

## Mutts

# WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

**Aries** Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you're likely to feel happy and patient, which will positively reflect in your work. Tasks will be completed efficiently. A visit to a religious place might be on the cards, and you may feel inclined to donate to a charitable cause. Love birds may build deeper trust in their relationship. You'll also have the strength to stay ahead of your opponents.

**Taurus** Apr 21 – May 20
You may feel low and uninspired today, which could impact your performance. Delays in projects might affect your professional and personal reputation. Avoid adventurous trips or reckless driving. Love relationships could face challenges. Job seekers may feel disappointed with current prospects.

**Gemini** May 21 – Jun 21
A wave of positive energy surrounds you. Things are stabilizing, and you may consider starting a new business, possibly in partnership. A long-distance trip is also likely. Trust and harmony will grow between you and your spouse, strengthening your domestic life.

**Cancer** Jun 22 – July 23
You're likely to perform your best at work today. A stronger bond with your boss might lead to new responsibilities or even a promotion. Chronic health issues may start to improve. Financially, incentives are likely. Disputes with siblings may also be peacefully resolved. Job seekers might find success.

**Leo** Jul 24 – Aug 23
Life may feel a bit challenging today. Consider seeking advice from elders to handle tough situations wisely. Patience is key. Concerns about your children's education may arise, and a short academic trip could be planned. Investors should avoid speculation and make informed decisions.

**Virgo** Aug 24 – Sep 23
You may feel dissatisfied and disheartened by a lack of results despite your efforts. Review any important documents carefully before signing. Investments may come up—follow your intuition, especially if you're considering fixed assets.

**Libra** Sep 24 – Oct 22
Expect to be engaged in social gatherings or family events, which could expand your personal network. A short work-related trip may also be on the agenda. Disputes with siblings are likely to be resolved. With support from subordinates, difficult tasks will be completed. Your confidence is strong, but practice patience in interactions.

**Scorpio** Oct 23 – Nov 22
You're likely to be involved in family gatherings. A polite and calm demeanor will improve your reputation among relatives and friends. You may spend on decorative or luxury items that elevate your social image. Some good news from a close relative may uplift your mood.

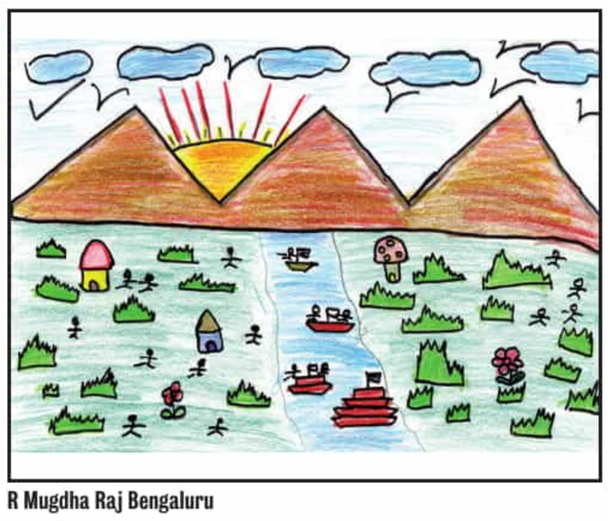
**Sagittarius** Nov 23 – Dec 22
Happiness surrounds you, making the day pleasant and productive. Your vitality helps in making crucial decisions that may soon yield profits. A short work-related trip is possible. Support from colleagues ensures timely task completion. Students will be more focused. Watch your eating habits to avoid stomach issues.

**Capricorn** Dec 23 – Jan 20
You may feel down today. Sleep deprivation could impact both mental and physical health. A family member's health may also concern you. Overspending on unnecessary items may hurt your savings. Stay cautious of opponents and avoid falling into traps or conspiracies.

**Aquarius** Jan 21 – Feb 19
Your day starts on a cheerful note. Quick decisions at work may lead to benefits soon. A new income source may appear, boosting savings. With your partner's support, business investments could be fruitful. Mutual understanding with your spouse increases, promoting domestic harmony.

**Pisces** Feb 20 – Mar 20
It's a busy day at the office, which may leave little time for family. Mental fatigue might weigh you down. However, with elders' blessings, job seekers might land a prestigious role, and managers could see promotion into senior positions. Your professional reputation is likely to rise.

## KIDZONE



R Mugdha Raj Bengaluru

Sanjanna, Bengaluru

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# SOLUTIONS

**SOLVE IN 1M**
1/(315/70)-2/9
1/(9/2)-2/9
1 x 2/9-2/9
2/9-2/9=0

**BULL'S EYE**
gilt, girt, GLITTER, grit, legit, litter, rite, tier, tiger, tile, tilt, tire, title, trite

**STRIKE OUT**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N | A | R | C | ■ | R | A | F | ■ | L | I | M | P | | |
| E | ■ | E | ■ | E | ■ | O | ■ | N | ■ | L | ■ | ■ | | |
| I | N | H | E | R | E | ■ | L | P | L | A | T | E | | |
| L | ■ | I | ■ | A | S | C | I | ■ | D | ■ | A | ■ | | |
| A | B | R | A | D | E | ■ | O | C | E | A | N | S | | |
| R | ■ | E | L | I | ■ | P | ■ | T | A | Y | ■ | E | | |
| M | ■ | B | A | C | C | H | U | S | ■ | ■ | ■ | F | | |
| S | ■ | H | U | T | ■ | B | ■ | R | E | S | ■ | O | | |
| T | H | E | M | I | S | ■ | M | I | S | T | E | R | | |
| R | ■ | A | ■ | O | A | K | E | N | ■ | R | ■ | G | | |
| O | W | N | I | N | G | ■ | A | G | O | U | T | I | | |
| N | ■ | E | ■ | A | ■ | N | ■ | C | ■ | ■ | ■ | V | | |
| G | A | Y | A | ■ | N | I | T | ■ | S | K | Y | E | | |

**FAST FIVE**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | E | S | T | S |
| E | X | P | E | L |
| S | T | R | A | Y |
| A | R | I | S | E |
| W | A | G | E | R |

**RIDDLER**
Heart

**QUICK**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B | A | P | T | I | S | E | D | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | G |
| L | ■ | R | M | ■ | L | ■ | C | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | N |
| K | O | L | I | ■ | P | R | I | S | O | N | E | R | ■ | C |
| A | ■ | O | ■ | O | ■ | X | ■ | M | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | O |
| S | T | O | R | K | S | ■ | I | ■ | M | P | H | A | L | ■ |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | E | ■ | A | R | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | E |
| F | ■ | R | I | S | K | ■ | B | Y | A | N | D | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| D | A | T | ■ | ■ | ■ | A | ■ | ■ | ■ | I | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| C | O | L | ■ | L | ■ | A | ■ | I | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| O | ■ | S | S | A | L | ■ | O | ■ | W | O | L | F | ■ | ■ |
| N | ■ | R | ■ | E | ■ | S | ■ | E | ■ | E | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |

**MENSA PUZZLE**
3. In each circle, the sum of the numbers in the left hand half of the circle equals double that of the numbers in the right hand half of the circle.

**QUOTE UNCODE**
If you ask me what I want, I'll tell you. I want everything.

**SUDOKU**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 6 |
| 9 | 6 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 9 |
| 4 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 2 |
| 7 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 8 |
| 6 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 7 |
| 1 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| 8 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 1 |

**ALPHA TRIANGLE**
R, Ra, Arc, Cart, Trace, Cartel, Scarlet.

**GO FIGURE**
Easy
8 + 5 + 5 - 6 = 12
Medium
4 x 8 / 2 - 6 = 10
Hard
7 x 3 + 9 - 7 = 23

**LOOP**

**KAKURO**

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